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SERVICE DATE - JUNE 11, 2001

DO

FR-4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 179X)]

Union Pacific Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Merced County, CA

[STB Docket No. AB-458X]

California Northern Railroad Company—Discontinuance Exemption—in Merced County,
CA

On May 22, 2001, the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) and the California Northern Railroad Company (CNR) jointly filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903, permitting UP to abandon and CNR to discontinue service over a 1.10-mile segment of the Los Banos Branch, extending from milepost 140.07 to milepost 141.17 in Los Banos, Merced County, CA. There are no stations on the line, which traverses U. S. Postal Service Zip Code 93635.

The line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in the railroads' possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

The interests of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

By issuance of this notice, the Board is instituting an exemption proceeding pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by September 7, 2001.

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Any offer of financial assistance (OFA) under 49 CFR 1152.27(b)(2) will be due no later than 10 days after service of a decision granting the petition for exemption. Each offer must be accompanied by a \$1,000 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

All interested persons should be aware that, following abandonment of rail service and salvage of the line, the line may be suitable for other public use, including interim trail use. Any request for a public use condition under 49 CFR 1152.28 or for trail use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 will be due no later than July 2, 2001. Each trail use request must be accompanied by a \$150 filing fee. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(27).

All filings in response to this notice must refer to STB Docket No. AB-33 (Sub-No. 179X) et al. and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423-0001; (2) Mack H. Shumate, Jr., 101 North Wacker Drive, Room 1920, Chicago, IL 60606; and (3) David L. Parkinson, 221 Gateway Road West, Suite 401, Napa, CA 94558. Replies to the exemption petition are due July 2, 2001.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Services at (202) 565-1592 or refer to the full abandonment or discontinuance regulations at 49 CFR part 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) at (202) 565-1545. [TDD for the hearing impaired is available at 1-800-877-8339.]

An environmental assessment (EA) (or environmental impact statement (EIS), if necessary) prepared by SEA will be served upon all parties of record and upon any

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agencies or other persons who commented during its preparation. Any other persons who would like to obtain a copy of the EA (or EIS) may contact SEA. EAs in these abandonment proceedings normally will be made available within 60 days of the filing of the petition. The deadline for submission of comments on the EA will generally be within 30 days of its service.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at
“WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.”

Decided: June 4, 2001.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams

Secretary